7/14/71

Dear Orestes,

The two stories and the excerpts from the affidavits in the July 12 States-Item, which I have just received and for which I thank you, are helpful to me in enabling me to understand what might be possible and what must be produced if the government has any kind of case at all against Garrison and was not, in fact, engaged in a deliberate plot to frame him. These also can be interpreted to have other meaning. So you can understand how my thinking is developing, whether the future shows it to be right or wrong, let me explain it, for I've dropped everything to read these things in a hurry, which also means I can have made a mistake because I hurried.

The Story with the headline, "Charges Against DA 'Shocking' - - McKeithen:

This can give an understanding of how the governor feels, what he thinks the facts are, and how he thinks it may all end. He can be as wrong as anyone else, but he should have better sources of information. He could have said, very simply,"This matter is before the courts and I think it would be best if I made no comment until after the jury decides". Nobody could have criticized him for that. But instead, these are the things he does:

He says he can't removed Garrison;

He says that only Garrison's old enemy, the Metropolitan Crime Commission, has asked for his removal (and do they not know the law as the governor cites it which says he can't, as he put it?), which is simply one way of supporting Garrison by saying there is no demand for his removal;

He says that he and Garrison are still good friends.

Now I think there are other provisions of the law under which, if the governor expected Garrison to lose and be a liability, he could do something, but it has been so long since I saw any reference to it I may be wrong.. However, the governor here goes out of his way to say that after all these charges he is still Garrison's friend. This can be a tribute to Garrison's popularity in the state, but because it is something the governor did not have to say, I interpret it as his forecast that Garrison will come out on top and that at a leter date taking this position will be a political benefit to the governor.

"Special Grand Jury Sought by Gallinghouse". For peanuts, for unimportant pinball operators? And after all these years? That is what they need a special grand jury for under the new federal law? Nothing about Marcello and the Mafia, the many other places throughout the country where the Mafia operates? And these local small-time pinball operators are "organized crime"? Nonsense, they are small-time. Organized crime is generally understood to mean the big boys who operate in large territories they have divided among themselves, not nickel and dime small-timers. This makes me believe that one of the objectives is really to get Garrison plus other things too complicated to go into here. Political things, changes in the form of government, changes in the meaning of the law, abridgement of the rights of ordinary people, the kinds of things that earned Nixon and company the support of the Bringuiers and his kind of estupides friends.

The only and very few quotations I have seen from Garrison when they had bugs and tapes for a year do not indicate he was taking any kind of graft. Maybe they will yet produce such evidence, but I do not expect it and I will be surprised if it exists. If it is true it has to exist, as I will explain. They had Gervais wired with a transmitter by which everything the microphone picked up was transmitted to a receiver from which it was fed into a tape recorder or more than one. And Gervais was working for them. Therefore, it was child's play, even for a dope - and Gervais is smart - to put out the right words to get Garrison hooked into what really does show he was taking a payoff, graft. Here are some samples of what I mean from the transcripts in this issue of the 12th alone:

Soule would be the go-between, to give Gervais money for Garrison? Why this extra step when Gervais was getting it or could have directly, without adding another and a very weak link?

"Gervais stated that Jim Garrison is already aware of someone in the city being paid off." With all Gervais phone conversations tape recorded and with him wired for sound, they have to produce a recording of this. I don't think they will or are able to.

If this thing had been going on for so long, why, on January 31, 1971, "We have been trying to put a deal together for a long while"?

The item for February 11 is different from all other I have seen in this respect: it does not give the place from which Gervais placed the call. All others are, as I remember it, Rooms 876 or 276 of the Fountainbleau.

If I remember that motel correctly, we will find that for his meeting with Garrison Gervais used a different room, in the part in which I used to stay. I think the part referred to, if it is anything like the room in which Gervais once let me use the phone because the air conditioner in my room was so noisy, would be too large for what I would expect them to set up for any meeting with Garrison, hidden microphones or bugs and probably cameras, which require but small holes but also require, unless there are great number of them, a relatively small space otherwise the people can too easily walk to where the camera cannot see them.

So, one of the measures of the honesty of the government case will be if they can and do produce tape recordings of all these conversations, of which those above are but a few, that Gervais said he had with Garrison. Unless they took place inside a bank vault, these have to exist or Garrison was framed deliberately. At least, that is the way I now see it.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg